DW BULLETIN
THE MONTHLY NEWS 'ZINE
NUMBER 31 FEBRUARY 1986

`Doctor Circus´ comes to town...

The Dancer and the Clown

DOCTOR WHO—STARRING BONNIE LANGFORD AS MELANIE AND WITH COLIN BAKER AS THE DOCTOR ! THE PERSON HAPPIEST WITH THE NEWS OF THE DOCTOR'S NEW COMPANION MUST SURELY BE GARY DOWNIE—AT LAST HE HAS A DANCE PARTNER WITH WHOM TO THRILL AND DELIGHT AMERICAN CONVENTION AUDIENCES ! (SEE PAGE 6 ...)

The Early Years~pt 2 inside

EDITORIAL

FEB'86 ISSUE 31

Despite the cover proclaiming to be the February 1986 issue of DWB, chances are you'll be reading this in early March! I suppose I should apologise for keeping you waiting a cold ten weeks since the Winter Special, due to my extended trip down-under—but on the positive side, I've come back almost totally rejuvenated and confidently predict yet another year of DWB! With that in mind, on page 15 you'll find our first ever annual subscription form—designed to save you money on DWB, time (and stamps !) ordering DWB every month/every few months, plus an attractive free gift as well. It would be wise to fill it in and send it off as soon as possible, and by doing so you will ensure your issue of DWB is despatched each month before all other types of orders, and you will avoid being a victim of missing an issue that sells out on publication. From April the price each issue again increases due to a variety of reasons, most notably as ever escalating print costs. We feel readers would prefer to pay a little extra rather than see the magazine suffer in cheaper production. The increase in price will also enable us to continue with our lavish colour specials—the last one of which went dangerously over budget.

Finally, this month, a cue for a new feature; if JN-T had been sacked and you had been put in charge of DOCTOR WHO for the 14-episode Season 23, how would you have gone about shaping this crucial season? The best ideas will see print—GARY

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Cover: Photo (c) Raymond Cusick from the 1964 story THE SENSORITES, featuring (left to right) Carole Ann Ford, William Hartnell, Jacqueline Hill and William Russell.

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3 - 5: LETTERS; Your views on DWB#29/30, Eric Saward, Bonnie Langford...

6 - 7: NEWS; Robots of Revlux, NFT2, A day with Ray Cusick, Space Cops go-ahead, W.H.Allen's FURY FROM THE DEEP, Blackpool shutdown... (With special thanks to Jeremy Bentham who manned the DWB newsdesk in January)

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THIS RESTING LEGEND BY TIM WESTMACOTT

SOUND OFF

After the 20th Season, the fanzine 'Eye of Horus' printed a much-attacked article of mine entitled 'This Rusty Legend' which concluded with my looking to the future and wondering whether Nathan-Turner and Co. would polish up the legend of DOCTOR WHO or consign it to the scrapheap. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect him to do both ! Season 21 brought back the edge-of-the-seat qualities which had been missing for so long, and for a few glorious stories that legend shone with a rare brilliance. Then...

Once upon a time (i.e: pre Nathan-Turner) fans were usually in agreement over the merits and faults of any particular story. However, the advent of Season 19, when this producer's stamp was first fully felt, saw the development of a split in Fandom. It wasn't a serious split and bolied down to whether one praised Davison with enthusiasm or reservation.

THE TWIN DILEMMA had a terrible storyline, but Colin Baker made a rather promising Doctor so one had to wait until Season 22 to make a fair judgment, and this time a much deeper rift formed with fans either loving or hating him. Letters in fanzines, and from my own correspondence, would seem to indicate that supporters of Colin Baker and Season 22 generally began watching DOCTOR WHO no earlier than Season 7, whereas those who were happy with neither began watching in the black and white years. This theory is supported by the fact that the only younger fans I know who loathed almost everything about the last season are ones with videos of pre-1970 stories. Even granted that the old ones were better, I find it hard to believe that anyone who watched the Hinchcliffe-produced Tom Baker stories can enjoy the Nathan-Turner-produced Colin Baker ones.

When Michael Grade announced his decision to postpone the next season, I wrote to congratulate him and gave my reasons for agreeing with his actions. Many people, I'm sure, will condemn me for this, but I believed that there was too much wrong with the series for it to be allowed to continue unchecked. This article expands on the ideas expressed in my letter.

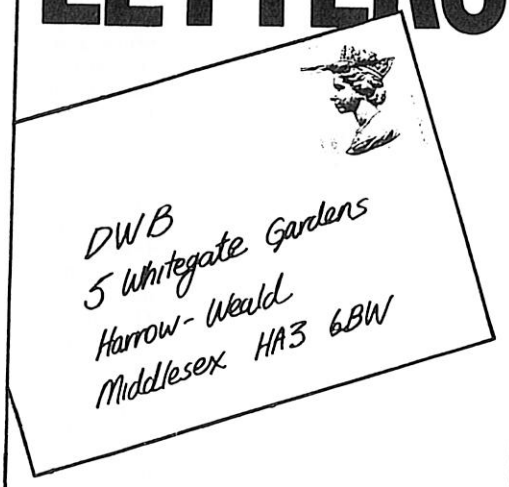
If you examine the work of any previous DOCTOR WHO producer you will find a consistency of style whichs comes about through having a firm idea of where you want the programme to go. Looking back over the Nathan-turner era, one is left wondering what he set out to achieve. It is difficult to reconcile the fact that excellent stories, such as WARRIORS' GATE, KINDA and REVELATION OF THE DALEKS, which demonstrated a brave attempt to experiment, were produced by the same person who gave us MEGLOS, TIME-FLIGHT and ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN. Season 22 confirmed my long-held belief that he has such a slack control of the programme that a good production is more a matter of chance than design. He seems to think that after choosing the right ingredients, he can sit back and everything will gel of its own accord. The success of the greater part of Season 21 was obviously due only to the actors, writers and directors, as no professional producer would deliberately follow such excellence as CAVES OF ANDROZANI with such complete rubbish as THE TWIN DILEMMA. Colin Baker was not a bad choice on JN-T's part, but he has delegated too much responsibility for our impressions of this Doctor and his stories to his script editor. Eric Saward's first mistake was to decide that the new Doctor's introductory story should be as simple as possible, so as to focus one's attention on him. The absurdity of this idea is borne out by the universally poor reception of THE TWIN DILEMMA compared to CASTROVALVA—the complex story which introduced us to Peter Davison's Doctor. If the story is trash, the Doctor follows it down the disposal-chute.

Saward's second and greatest error, the one which was probably responsible for the show's postponement and therefore doubt over its future, was to treat each of Season 22's 45-minute episodes as padded 25-minute episodes, rather than the equivalent of 2 episodes joined together as RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS had been. This explains why all of the scripts were so threadbare, leaving a great deal of potential development ignored. Michael Grade is quoted as describing THE TWO DOCTORS as "Uninspiring", and I believe that the season outlined above is responsible for his opinion and decision to step in. But I was amazed when excessive violence was blamed for the unpopularity of Season 22 with younger audiences. Kids love violence ! In my opinion, the problem lies in the fact that although the violence was more explicit than in recent years, there was no drama attached to it. ATTACK OF THE CYBERMEN was criticised for the crushing of Lytton's hands, but since Nathan-Turner has allowed these once-awesome monsters to lose all credibility, I would have thought that the sight of the Cyber-Controller in his rent-a-tent costume would generate enough mirth to cancel out any horror. I was also very surprised to see that 'No Name Given', in the letters pages of DWM#99 was shocked by the opening scene of VENGEANCE OF VAROS. The character Arak echoed my opinion when he said: "It's pathetic !" The incident communicated hardly any tension to me at all. The fact that the beam we saw did no damage to the wall behind Jondar leads us to believe that neither will it harm the prisoner himself. The purple beam-marks we see on his abdomen much later on were so slight that I completely missed them on my initial viewing. I dread to think what 'No Name' and his wife made of the acid-bath scene. As for myself, I didn't even notice the blood until it was pointed out to me, since the foam concealed just about everything. The other scene which seemed to cause concern was that of the Doctor's hanging. But how can one take such a scene seriously when the Doctor doesn't seem to care what's happening, and the main villain looks like a malignant garden gnome sitting on a portable loo which has back-fired ?.

The violence in CAVES OF ANDROZANI was less explicit, yet was much more effective as a result of better acting and directing, but for most of Season 22 it was buried in saccharine. In THE TWO DOCTORS the full impact of the horrific idea of cutting up the Doctor cell by cell whilst fully conscious but unable to move as Dastari seeks the symbiotic nucleii was so muted by setting up the Sontarans as figures of fun, that Shockeye's rat-tasting drew more attention from the complainers.

Saward should have been sacked after the error over the dates in MAWDRYN UNDEAD. We might then have been spared the insulting idea in THE TWO DOCTORS that the second Doctor was on a mission for the Time Lords, whereas even the youngest DWM reader knows that this incarnation was on the run from his own kind until the end of his final story. If these errors only prove lack of research, only incompetence can explain a complete con-

LETTERS



DAVID GIBBS, St Andrews, FIFE

Last year, the DWB Winter Special arrived a day ahead of schedule—this year it was two days. Is this your superb efficiency, or just an extremely zealous Post Office ?

Well, as expected, the Special was fantastic, the best yet—you improve with every issue—but can you keep it up ? If it all gets too much for you then please take on some helpers—DWB is too good to lose.

The use of colour was far better than the posters of previous issues—more like a professional magazine really. The contents really benefited from it.

BUT...there was one use to which all this snazzy colour printing was put which cannot pass without comment. I am referring to that appalling sexist cover. Not that it was badly drawn, far from it, but for crying out loud, Peri was nearly topless ! I can see you coming in for a hell of a lot of criticism over this, and I think you are a bit irresponsible to actually give the BBC cause to ban you. It's also terribly hypocritical to use the female body in a blatant attempt to stimulate reaction, when recent articles in the magazine have been condemning the TV show for just the same thing. JN-T may need sex to boost ratings, you do not. What next, I wonder ? A Colin Baker full-frontal ? (No ! I was only joking !).

OK then, that disgraceful lapse aside, the rest of the Winter Special was superb, and given the rare photos and fantastic JJB article, I think I can overlook that blatant waste of space in the centre pages. Oh dear, another BUT. The write-up to this index was a personal, biased and subjective piece of writing, and should have been clearly labelled as such, rather than attempting to pass it off as some kind of definitive guide to 22 years of DOCTOR WHO. Alright, so everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but in a reference guide one should stick to the facts, and present personal views as personal views. Maybe (for example) the author does think that ROBOT is a banal title, and that THE STONES OF BLOOD is a good one, but this kind of subjective writing does not belong in a piece offered as a definitive reference work.

Right, that moan over, onto the Androzani Effect. Oh God, I thought, another Holmes worshipper about to tell us(again) that ANDROZANI was the greatest story of all time and that Season 22 was the biggest load of crap since the creation. Well, in part I was right, for Paul Cornell did seem to attack Season 22 (and in particular Eric Saward) rather viciously. Can't he accept that, for once, Saward might actually have something original to offer without cribbing from past stories ? (I agree it does seem out of character, but true nonetheless).

But Paul made some good points. Yes, the series has become more violent, and I think he singles out the one factor that may have turned people away from the show over the last year. The Doctor is becoming amoral. He no longer has a conscience. He helps people on the spur of the moment, often to boost his own ego, and cares more for himself than those he is meant to be aiding. We can no longer sympathise or identify with the Doctor, and as we become alienated from the lead character so we become alienated from the series as a whole. You cannot have an anti-hero without a hero, and I'm afraid Peri doesn't quite meet the specification. An arrogant, or abrasive Doctor can be quite fun, but only if it is countered with some kind of audience identification. Quite honestly, at times I wish the monster would eat the Doctor !

The 'An Unearthly Revelation' write-up was indeed a subjective piece of writing and really should have been labelled as such.

MARTIN MARPRELATE, OXFORD

My mum didn't like the picture of Peri on the front of the Winter Special. She also says how can one magazine be two issues ? I don't care, I still like DWB, except for the letters from Martin Wiggins.

Apologies to anyone who took offence to Phil's artwork. After much thought and deliberation, we decided to keep Peri's exposure in, believing most people would accept it as artistic licence. It certainly wasn't intended to be crude, but clearly what is art to some isn't necessarily art to others.

DANIEL ADAMS, Tuebrook, LIVERPOOL

What can I say ? I thought the '85 Summer Special was the finest issue of a fanzine I had read, earlier this year, but now my opinion has changed.

There was I, sitting down and opening my envelope, little realising that what was inside was, indisputably, the finest fanzine there has ever been ! You may think I sound rather melodramatic, but I honestly mean every word ! The 'zine shone with class from cover to cover. Its blend of superb artwork and previously unseen colour photographs, along with a wide variety of letters, factual articles and three marvellous interviews, not to mention the usual informative news pages and the three full colour Target covers—what better present for a fan to receive at Christmas ?

May I say a massive thankyou to the features writers, whose work was impeccable, and to you, Gary, for the mammoth amount of time it must have taken you to edit the issue and release it in time for Xmas.

Many thanks for your praise, Daniel, which has been passed on. Letters like yours suddenly make everything seem so much more worthwhile.

SEAN GIBBONS, IRELAND

Thanks for #29-30, bright and interesting as ever. The transcription of JN-T at Genesis was enjoyable and informative, as was your interview with Nigel Robinson, even if he still won't admit Terrance Dicks ought to write better adaptions ! Transcription type articles are a good way to present interviews and to record comments made at events, recounting them both for those who were there and for those who couldn't attend.

Jeremy's foretaste of his new book was a delightful surprise—I had no idea that such a wealth of quality material from the earliest days had survived ! It is almost 20 years since the first Doctor ceased his weekly materialisations on our screens, yet how fortunate we are that, thanks to Raymond Cusick, the still-undiluted enthusiasm of Jeremy Bentham, and their generosity in sharing this treasure trove of historical documentation with the rest of us, we are still being entertained by such finds as these. At last, Mr.Cusick will receive a little more recognition for his innovative and imaginative input at the creation of DOCTOR WHO—a visual counterpart to the creative script-editing of David Whitaker.

I hope someone uncovers part 4 of THE TENTH PLANET—it would be amusing to see this story repeated in 1986 !

Jon Pertwee's bright red cords certainly brought a dash of colour to the INFERNO shot !

TIM GREAVES

Wow, what a tremendous surprise. The DWB Winter Special arrived on the Sunday before Christmas (yes, that's right, Sunday), and I've got to say I think it's your best issue yet. Everything in it was just perfect, especially Phil Bevan's superb art cover and the invaluable An Unearthly Revelation index. Congratulations to all involved. What better gift could a fan wish for at Christmas ?

TIM WESTMACOTT, Potters Bar, HERTS

I enjoyed the Winter Special very much, especially the rare photographs. I can't wait to buy Jeremy's new book. The only thing I didn't like was the story listing as the space could have been used for articles etc. However, I'm sure it will be very useful to a lot of people.

I hope the rumour that Season 24 will be produced by David Maloney is grounded in fact—he'd do wonders for the programme. I'm surprised I saw no mention of it in the Special.

It was indeed well rumoured that David Maloney was approached in December with a view to taking over the producer's seat in 1987. The irony is, as the show's future again hangs in the balance—this time as a direct result of inane actions by the current production team—WHY wasn't he asked LAST February ?!

KATHLEEN TOTH, Ohio, U.S.A.

Congratulations on a spectacular cover for #29-30. Now to the complaints.

I was a bit annoyed with the comment made in reference to Tom Baker's non-participation with other DOCTOR WHO cast for the November charity appeal. It was hardly fair to bring this up and NOT mention that he was in Dublin doing a new play from the end of August until the beginning of December.

I was also surprised to find that (on pg.29 of the JN-T interview) Ian Marter does not know that it was James Hill (not Ville) who worked on the Scratchman script. The whole universe knows that, except for whoever transcribed the tapes, I guess *(Oops !)*.

One last comment. I wondered, not for the first time, how long it is thought to take for episodes to be sold to American television. Paul Cornell argues that ANDROZANI increased Davison's popularity tremendously in the UK and *will do so in the States*. All of the Davison episodes have been available for sale here now for over a year and most of the major markets have had them at least once by now. One problem with the way in which DOCTOR WHO episodes are shown here is that they get used up at an alarming rate. The whole Davison era goes by in the blink of an eye. Other than that, I am in complete agreement with the article. I thought that ANDROZANI stood out as one of the few good scripts in recent years, and one of the very few to give the fifth Doctor any real personality. It was certainly not the best of Robert Holmes, and the very fact that it has been

praised so lavishly is indicative of the surrounding weakness.

I certainly hope that all the unity in Fandom that is being proclaimed is going to last, but if I were a wagering person...

DAVID GRYC, Sittingbourne, KENT

Many thanks for the Winter Soecial—better than any Christmas present. The cover, I might add, was superb. I enjoyed the piece on the Children in Need appeal. It annoys me that Tom Baker seems to want to ignore requests for attendances, whilst in a recent Mail on Sunday interview he wonders why he can pass these days unnoticed in the street !

The Michael Briant interview was superb. I've never enjoyed an interview as much as I did this. All the anecdotes and quips on aspects like the Tardis actually being able to fly were great. Can't wait to read the rest of it.

An Unearthly Revelation was, well, um, interesting ! I'm sure this was probably the best way to present a complete dossier of facts but I found very little to interest me. The only useful part for me was the How To Use It part which gave us all the facts we really wanted—or at least I wanted to know. Forgive my lack of appreciation. I'm sure it took ages to research it and full marks for that. It will be invaluable as a quick source of reference, but I certainly won't be detaching it from my DWB and definitely won't be sticking future seasons over the most interesting part.

Contrary to Steve Roddam's remark about THE TWO DOCTORS first edition being limited to America (Letters), my copy certainly has 'First Edition' emblazoned across its cover and I picked that up at my local Menzies (though W.H.Smiths only ever got the second edition—I wonder why..?).

ROGER DILLEY, ESSEX

May I take this oppurtunity of congratulating you on your success in the DWAS fanzine poll. After reading your brilliant '85-6 special, I can see that any other 'zine in the running is going to have to be very good to compete with you for the top fanzine award for 1986.

In the Special I noticed a letter from Steve Roddam questioning the lack of first editions of THE TWO DOCTORS paperback in this country. I am pleased to tell you they haven't all gone Stateside.. Certain branches of W.H.Smiths do carry copies of this much sought after book, although the specialist shops I have been to haven't been able to get any of the first editions —I wonder why ?

Amongst the many fascinating articles in the Special, I particularly enjoyed the coverage you gave to the Genesis event. I was unfortunately unable to attend, but I found your report and interview with JN-T an informative and enjoyable read.. Long may you continue to report with such accuracy on all the Phoenix ventures. But one point I feel I must correct you on is that, since PanoptiCon 6, Metamorphic Creations have changed their name to Mirage.

* IS SAWARD TO BLAME ? *

RICHARD FITZGERALD, LIVERPOOL 17

The Androzani Effect was a concise and accurate appraisal of that story's success, and the subsequent disastrous decline of the series. I often wonder whether JN-T or Saward should be held to blame for the situation at present. I have now conduded that they're equally responsible for the mess !

One point Paul Cornell overlooked was that having script editors do rewrites is not necessarily a bad thing. After all, Holmes did it all the time during Philip Hinchcliffe's era (so Saward is even emulating the mass script editing style !). I guess the difference boils down to whether or not you have the talent to shape a plot into an exciting, dramatic and coherent script...

An Unearthly Revelation was a quite superb piece of reference material that deserves the title of 'Most comprehensive indexing of DOCTOR WHO ever published'. Looking through it, I was interested to see that JN-T has been working continuously on the programme since 1977 ! And as producer, he has used 15 different directors and 20 different writers, only three of whom had previously worked on the programme prior to his reign ! This speaks volumes.

ROBERT MOYE, Crowborough, E.SUSSEX

Fan enemy No.1 at the moment would appear to be JN-T, but, although I think he must accept the blame for the programme's current position, I refuse to believe the same person can engineer seasons of such differing quality as seasons 18 and 22 without help from someone and I'm pretty sure that person is Eric Saward, who has singlehandedly masterminded the BBC execs' pretext for the cancellation. It's a sad fact that since Saward's arrival we have been continually besieged with plotless drivel. It's surely no coincidence that, under Christopher Bidmead, Johnny Byrne can write a classic like THE KEEPER OF TRAKEN while, for Season 21, having had his script hacked to pieces by Saward the demon editor, WARRIORS OF THE DEEP is his best effort.

The only conclusions to be drawn from this is that, in an attempt to appease the "A-Tots of ITV", as Paul Cornell describes them, plots are surgically removed from all incoming scripts at birth, so as not to impede the flow of the mindless violence. Although I see no harm in Saward's policy of not including plots in his own scripts, it does get a bit much when he insists on applying this maxim to everyone elses' as well, with or without their knowledge.

The truth is that the programme is now practically worthless—it has been since Saward's arrival and will continue to be

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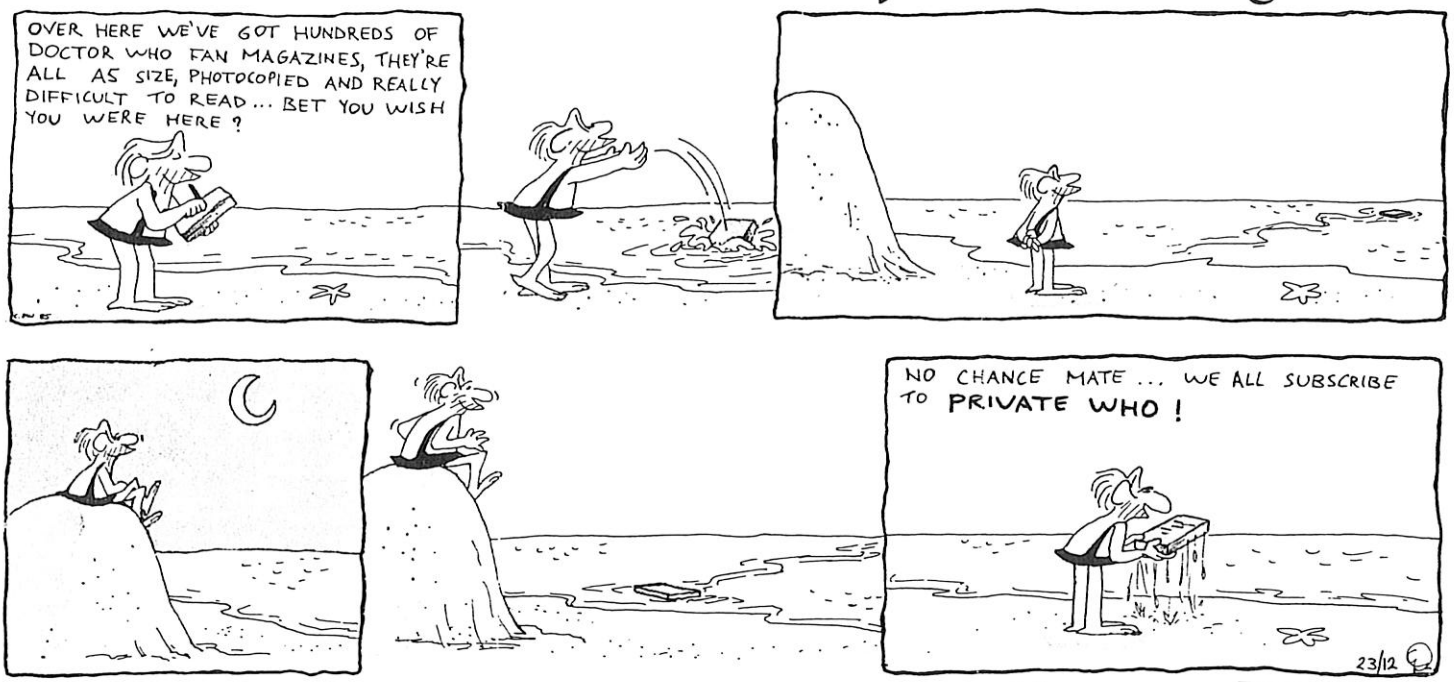
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until his departure.

With Saward now in the producer's chair for Season 23, in practice if not in theory (*"Story content is now solely in the hands of Eric Saward"*, DWB#27), the end, as they say, is nigh.

TIM MUNRO, Dalton, HUDDERSFIELD
It's sad to see JN-T dismiss the possibility of destroying Gallifrey. *"That would be stupid"* he says. Oh dear... it would also be dramatic, imaginative, brave, daring, and would open up many new areas for the show to explore. Of course, we can't have that, can we ?

NEIL VAUGHAN, Elstree, HERTS
I was not pleased to read in #29 - 30 that Ron Jones has been chosen to direct one of the stories for Season 23. In this undeniably important time, DOCTOR WHO desperately needs good directors.

* BONNIE LANGFORD DOUBTS *

ANDREW ROBERTS, Bermondsey, LONDON
I was shocked and distressed to learn of the announcement that Bonnie Langford is to join the programme. I have nothing against Miss Langford, but to my mind this singer/dancer just isn't companion material. The idea of a health and fitness computer expert who constantly annoys the Doctor by singing in the Tardis seems to confirm the new direction Grade wants to take the show. If this is the case, then it is too ghastly to contemplate.

If Season 23 takes this course, I fear this will drive fans and public alike even further away from the series, and will only serve to knock the final nail in the coffin and seal the fate of the good Doctor's future forever.

STEPHEN FIELD, MANCHESTER
Unlike every companion before her, Bonnie Langford exists in the public eye primarily by her personality, and only secondarily as an actress, so it is difficult to see how future shows are not going to be known as 'The Doctor and Bonnie', instead of 'The Doctor and Melanie'.

The first press photos weren't very promising either, with Bonnie Langford showing how clever she is and Colin Baker just looking silly. And she will supposedly annoy the Doctor with her singing—can you imagine the Tardis alive with the sound of music ? Strewth !

Colin Baker, Nicola Bryant and Anthony Ainley are all actors who can be wonderful, as shown in stories like VENGEANCE ON VAROS, PLANET OF FIRE and LOGOPOLIS respectively. But all three are unable to rise above bad lines, and let's face it, while Eric Saward is script editor DOCTOR WHO needs actors who can do so.

With the combination of Eric Saward, and her status as personality, Bonnie Langford will have to be a damn good actress to make Melanie work. I do hope she does—I just doubt it.

RICHARD MOLESWORTH, WEST MIDLANDS
Up until about 5 minutes ago I was prepared to say that the general decline of DOCTOR WHO was due to Eric Saward and none other. It saddens me to say I was wrong. I no longer care what John Eller and any other JN-T supporter say—JN-T has singlehandedly ruined the show, aided and abetted by Eric Saward. I was looking forward to Season 23, but now...

Fourteen episodes, Bonnie Langford, and JN-T as producer ? I ask myself — is it worth it ? One glance at the photo of Colin Baker and Bonnie Langford skipping hand-in-hand through the gardens of BBC TV Centre leaves me in no doubt. DOCTOR WHO is past saving.

* THE TWO DOCTORS *

DR. COLIN M. BARRON, SCOTLAND
I was a little alarmed at some of the comments made at the Genesis Convention regarding David Banks' contribution to the forthcoming Cyber-book (eg: his idea for "Cyber-women" and a sequel to THE TENTH PLANET featuring General Butler's son or daughter). I don't see how anyone lacking a scientific training can be described as "The new Kit Pedler". Sounds more like the new Eric Saward ! As far as I'm concerned the Cybermen stories only went downhill when other writers tacked on new and silly concepts to the original legend. However, maybe my fears for the new book will be groundless.

Do you realise that 1986 is the 20th anniversary of the Cybermen ? Has DWB anything special planned. *Stay tuned...*

DR. DAVID CARLILE, NOTTINGHAM
For me, the highspot of the Genesis Con was the screening of SPEARHEAD FROM SPACE which I'd missed on its original transmission. I couldn't help thinking that if it were transmitted again it would be bound to draw a large audience. Why was it so good ? It was a good story, but more importantly it was well told, with no illogical obscurities thrown in (eg : the Master's disguise in TIME-FLIGHT), totally consistent characters (in contrast with, say, RESURRECTION where an army patrol rolls up in a plain blue van and the officer hands his pistol over to a civilian he's just met !), and, best of all, nothing that insults the viewer's intelligence (which occurs in most stories today).

Colin Baker is not a bad Doctor—but he's been given some utter garbage to try and act in. JN-T has managed to produce a few good stories and may do so again—with a different script editor, who knows? Good writing does not cost more than bad, and unless the writing improves significantly, I can't see much future for the show. There is no reason why it cannot return to the same level of gripping storytelling.

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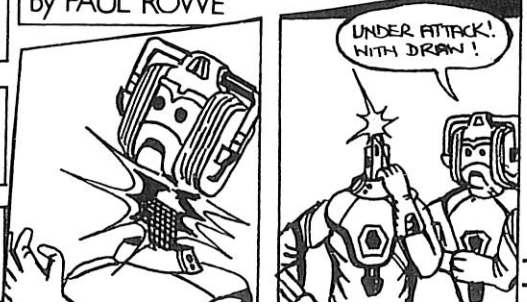

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THE DANCER AND THE CLOWN
(CONT'D...)

Fans have given a very lukewarm reception to the casting of show-business entertainer, Bonnie Langford, as the new companion Melanie, who takes over from Nicola Bryant half way through Season 23.

Producer John Nathan-Turner allegedly chose the 21-year-old singer/dancer for her "sparking" personality and hopes her appearance will influence the decision on whether the series continues into 1987.

Bonnie, who recently finished a run as Peter Pan (see cover) at the Aldwych Theatre in London, first hit the big time as a child entertainer on the talent show Oppurtunity Knocks, and at the age of 12 starred in ITV's Just William as the nauseating whining brat—Violet Elizabeth. Her big theatre break came with Cats, in which she played the part of Rumpleteazer, and more recently she starred alongside Wayne Sleep in the BBC's Hot Shoe Show—which also fell victim to Michael Grade's axe last year.

Her casting as Melanie, a computer programmer/keep fit fanatic, is indicative of the direction the show is to take on its return—away from the violence and towards humour.

For the first time since the departure of Sarah Jane, the companion will be British, and hales from present day Pease Pottage.

Although Bonnie has never been a regular viewer of the series, she is reportedly "thrilled" and "delighted" at being offered the plum role, adding: *"Being a young, feminine little girl, I did not follow DOCTOR WHO and much of the time when the programme was on I would be out at dancing classes"...*

'DOCTOR HUGE'

Joining Bonnie on January 23rd for the press photo-call was current Doctor Colin Baker who has become decidedly tubbier in the months since the show has been off the air. At 15st, he is 2st heavier, and on seeing Colin and Bonnie suspended from wires flying around the Peter Pan set at the Aldwych Theatre, an apparently shocked JN-T immediately decided to write Colin's extra bulk into the series by making Melanie a keep-fit fanatic who is always nagging the Doctor to lose weight! His weakness has been bottles of red wine and his wife, Marion's, home-cooking.

On the series' return, he said: *"It will be jokier and lighter—even if the Doctor is heavier than he has ever been!"*

THE ROBOTS OF REVLUX

Some "stunning" new monsters are promised for next season, among them a new race of robots who make their debut in Robert Holmes' opening story, ROBOTS OF REVLUX. It is believed the script has been written in six parts, with the first four episodes opening the season and the last two to close. This makes more sense when you learn that Gallifrey features heavily in the storyline, as does the planet Earth... The director assigned the vital job of translating this adventure to the screen is Nick Mallett, a new name to DOCTOR WHO. He is thought to be a close friend to Nathan-Turner.

Following this story will be the Sil tale, provisionally titled PLANET OF SIL. Ron Jones has been confirmed as director. Look out for a lot of Sils...

STORY DROPPED AT LAST MINUTE

However, all is not well on the production front for the next season. Despite the close proximity to filming commencing, a final upheaval has occured in the story line-up for Season 23. Regardless of all the work that has already gone into the planning of the season throughout the last 12 months, it is now known that one of the scheduled stories, probably the Christopher Bidmead script, has been dropped, thus leaving a substantial hole in the schedules for which a replacement is desperately being sought.

EXTENSIVE MODEL-WORK COMMISSIONED

An independant visual-effects company has been commissioned to construct a large cathedralesque spaceship which will feature heavily in the first story of the season—the Time Lord story by Robert Holmes, which will be entering production on Easter Monday. The model shooting, which will be done on film as opposed to video, will be shot at Elstree, which also handled the stunning effects for the Tripods city of the second season. In this story, a new race of robotic protagonists will be unveiled...

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE AXE has finally fallen on The Tripods. Despite the cliffhanger ending to the 2nd Season, Michael Grade has judged ratings to be too small to warrant the time, expense and resources required to complete the series.

MICHAEL GRADE'S *own protégé series, provisionally titled Space Cops, and mooted last year to be "the replacement" series of DOCTOR WHO, will begin production at Elstree this summer. Two pilot episodes for the series have been written by former 'WHO script writer Chris Boucher, who was also one of the guiding lights behind the success of Blakes 7.*

SCREENING of the TSW play, The Killing of Captain Katz, has been scheduled for late May/early June. The play, by ex-'WHO director/writer Peter Grimwade, concerns the events surrounding the winding down of a popular 20 year old sci-fi series whose producer is an ego-maniac...

A DAY WITH RAYMOND CUSICK *is an event scheduled for 28th June 1986. A joint venture between CMS and DWAS, it is hoped that a lot of Ray's material, both photos and props, will be displayed on the day, and it is also hoped other key people instrumental in the production of DOCTOR WHO in the beginning, such as Chris Barry, Brian Hodgson and Michael Briant, will also be able to attend subject to artistic committments. The event is planned to run between 10-7 in Surbiton, Surrey, and more details will be released as they become available.*

TITAN BOOKS are launching a a portfolio series based on the work of the best-ever DOCTOR WHO book illustrator—Chris Achilleos. May will see the release of five plates, based on five of his Target covers; WEB OF FEAR, THREE DRS, INVASION OF THE DINOSAURS, GENESIS OF THE DALEKS and THE MAKING OF DW.

Each plate has been reproduced from original artwork on heavyweight art paper complete with a presentation top sheet. They measure 295 x 422mm and they will be available worldwide: UK-£3 99, USA-$7 95.

THE INHERITORS OF TIME, *the Chicago-based DOCTOR WHO play, features its world premiere in May at the Pickwick Theatre. For more info, write to Ostrander Productions, Inc., 22 W.Monroe, rm 806, Chicago IL 60603 (U.S.A.).*

FINE ART CASTINGS are soon to face competition from Titan, who have put forward a tender for a license to market more DOCTOR WHO figures.

W.H.ALLEN'S *scheduled publication of the Life After the Tardis Book, featuring the Brigadier, has been abruptly withdrawn on instruction from the BBC. This action has further fuelled already strong rumours that Nick Courtney is about to shortly retain his record as the only main actor to have appeared with all of the Doctors.*

CHRIS CROUCH has left BBC Enterprises and has been replaced by Lorne Martin. Lorne has been with BBC Enterprises for over 10 years and was an early supporter of DWAS in its infancy, helping to arrange the loan of props and displays for the '77 and '78 conventions. John Yates, head of the BBC Photo Department, has been replaced by a former DOCTOR WHO secretary, Jane Judge.

GALLEY PRESS, *a W H Smiths imprint, have published a compilation annual containing a tale from Doctors 1-3, a few Tom Baker stories, many with Peter Davison and all of last year's Colin Baker Annual. The cover is also identical to the one used last year and with 192 pages it sells for £7 95, although cheaper in bargain shops.*

MICRO-POWER have now released versions of The Mines of Terror for the ZX Spectrum 48K, Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC 464/6128, all available on cassette for £14 95. There are also BBC and Amstrad disc versions on sale for £19 95, with the former featuring the Eprom chip.

APOLOGIES *to Fan-Aid Cymru and Welsh fan Robin Henley who we incorrectly reported as having connections with the fanzine Conveyor Belt in these pages last issue. We would like to point out that all the money raised at this event went direct to the Band-Aid fund and we regret any embarrassment or distress caused to any of the organisers of this event. Unfortunately, there was a malicious third party at work trying to stir trouble by phoning representatives of Fan-Aid Cymru whilst passing himself off as Fan-Aid official, Paul Cornell.*

REVENGE OF THE CYBERMEN and THE BRAIN OF MORBIUS are now both available on Laservision Video Discs retailing at £12.

N.F.T. Gets Go-ahead

By J.Jeremy Bentham

Decision has finally been reached to proceed this year with a celebration of British telefantasy at London's National Film Theatre.

First contemplated as far back as summer 1985, a firm mandate to go-ahead with the project has taken until now to achieve due to a variety of factors, not least being the imminent dissolution of the G.L.C. which currently subsidises the N.F.T..

This major telefantasy event is to be staged over a weekend in late July and will, like the DOCTOR WHO weekend in October 1983, be organised by the British Film Institute.

As a blueprint for the event, the B.F.I will be drawing on the success scored by its DOCTOR WHO celebration in terms of the time-tabling, promotion, booklet production and guest listing. The entire facilities of the National Film Theatre will be put at the B.F.I.'s disposal, including the two major theatre rooms—N.F.T.1 and N.F.T.2, day long refreshment facilities and a licensed bar.

The BBC has already agreed to open its archive to the BFI and release any s-f/fantasy material requested—the only exception being '1984', the sole rights to which are still held by the makers of the John Hurt/Richard Burton film.

Obviously this guarantees inclusion of DOCTOR WHO in the line-up, as well as other high profile series like Blakes 7, Quatermass, Doomwatch and Out of the Unknown. Also intended are other less well-known productions as Terry Nation's The Incredible Robert Baldrick (a pilot for a series mooted to replace DOCTOR WHO in the '70s), Verity Lambert's Adam Adamant Lives and Nigel Kneale's play The Stone Tape.

ITV companies and their associated distributors are proving harder to win assent from due mainly to their lack of a centralised body. Nevertheless, already I.T.C. is offering co-operation on such programmes as the Gerry Anderson shows, The Avengers, The Prisoner and any s-f episodes of Roger Moore's The Saint (yes, there was one...).

All material screened at the N.F.T. this July will be top-grade prints with high-definition sound-tracks. A guest list is already being drawn up with many names hailing from behind and in-front of the DOCTOR WHO cameras. Additionally, informal invitations will be going out to a wide range of people associated with the many productions being unfurled, so, as with the DOCTOR WHO weekend, you might be surprised by some of the people you'll find yourself talking to in the bar...

Advance booking will be available, as usual, to BFI members and their guests through BFI's monthly bulletin, though the greater bulk of tickets will only be available from the box office over the weekend itself.

As with any major undertaking plans will be very flexible up to the last week or two. Watch this space for more news over the coming months . . .

BBC LEAVE BLACKPOOL

By Roger Dilley

Tragedy has struck !

Afetr a long and reasonably successful history, the Tardis doors of the DOCTOR WHO Exhibition in Blackpool have been closed for good. Or to quote one of the workmen I spoke to, who were busily gutting the place: *"The BBC have pulled out of Blackpool"*.

Indeed, where once a maze of dimly lit corridors wound their way past cases filled with our favourite monsters, now stands a vast and empty cellar devoid of all the noise and atmosphere which once enthralled us.

There is nothing left. All the costumes and props, even the Tardis console have all been sent back to London.

Searching for some explanation for this havoc, I contacted the Tourism and Attractions Department of the Blackpool Borough Council. After some initial confusion over whether BBC Enterprises had actually left (I told them that this was true) they informed me that the Exhibition was going to be resited ...in America ! The lady I spoke to expressed some surprise at the BBC's decision as the Exhibition: *"Seemed to be doing quite well"*. . .

Despite the above news, the fans' annual pilgramage to Blackpool in May, to celebrate the first ten years of organised Fandom, is still on. Details from; Peter Lovelady, 6 The Elms, 27 Tooting Bec Rd, Upper Tooting, London.

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The Michael Briant Interview

PART TWO, CONDUCTED BY TIM COLLINS AT BBC THRESHOLD HOUSE ON FRIDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER 1985.

THE FIRST THREE STORIES YOU DIRECTED HAPPENED TO ALL BE 6-PARTERS AND YOU THEN WENT ON TO DO THREE 4-PARTERS. DID YOU HAVE ANY PREFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO FORMATS ?
No, but I personally quite liked the six-parters. With the exception of ROBOTS OF DEATH, I think the other two might perhaps have been better if they'd also been expanded to six-parters.

DEATH TO THE DALEKS—JOHN SCOTT MARTIN CRASHED AT 30 M.P.H.!

ON DEATH TO THE DALEKS YOU WERE WORKING WITH LIS SLADEN, WHO HAD JUST TAKEN ON THE ROLE AS JOURNALIST SARAH JANE SMITH, AND THIS WAS ALSO NEAR THE TIME OF JON PERTWEE'S DEPARTURE. DID YOU FEEL THIS AFFECTED EITHER OF THEIR PERFORMANCES ?
No. It's always terribly difficult for an actor to take over a role, which is effectively what Lis was doing, from someone who has been immensely successful. And Katy was immensely successful. But Barry cast an absolutely first-rate actress and, like all the Doctors, Lis and Katy were very different. All Lis did was simply her own thing and was always totally, totally believable, whereas Katy would be flamboyant and big and wear outrageous clothing (I think she bought all her gear in Carnaby Street or the Kings Road). Lis was much more quiet and sedate and worked equally as well in her own right, and was smashing, absolutely smashing !

AGAIN ON 'DEATH TO THE DALEKS' YOU UTILIZED VERY IMPRESSIVE VISUALS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS A SEQUENCE WHERE JON PERTWEE IS BEING ATTACKED BY AN EXXILON AND THE CAMERA IS RUSHING TOWARDS HIM, AND THEN YOU ALSO HAD FADING OUT OF ONE SCENE TO ANOTHER. WERE YOU CONSCIOUSLY TRYING TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT ON EACH STORY ?
I think DOCTOR WHO IS a special show, and I think it is also a show in which you should take risks as a director. It is not a show where you are paid to come in and do the job and photograph it and do things as normal work and walk away from it. For me, it was a show where you were paid to come in and try things out and experiment. I don't think anybody would have thanked a director for coming into the show and just doing the same things, story after story after story. Your job was certainly to keep the best of the effects that one had used—and I was always guilty of doing that—and I continually did use the same sort of effects.

It seemed to me that the thing with the Exxilons, for example, was that they were monsters without you knowing really why they were monsters. The original concept, which the designer and I had, was that you wouldn't be able to see them. We wanted them to be so integrated with the rocks that they were like chameleons, so you just couldn't see them at all. So that's why they were that shape and colour, and the Costume Design, Visual Effects and Art Departments all used the same sandy material from the location which we used and the concept really was that you couldn't see Exxilons. They merged into the background, and you never knew whether that was a rock or an Exxilon.

So, having got that premise, we decided that Exxilons weren't visibly dangerous, other than the fact that they were sinister. You can go on being sinister for five or ten minutes, but if you're going to do it for four episodes you've got to find a different way of being sinister. One way of being more sinister is to have two Exxilons instead of one Exxilon, or three or four! That's not altogether satisfactory, but by using a subjective camera that was a way of being more sinister and frightening. You didn't actually tell the audience any more of what an Exxilon was, but you did start to look at life in the way an Exxilon did, and to see the objects of an Exxilon's attention with obvious menace. So that was the reason for doing that.

SONIC SCREWDRIVER—THE BIGGEST DISSERVICE I EVER DID TO THE SHOW

IN 'DEATH TO THE DALEKS' WE SEE SARAH CLUBBING AN EXXILON FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE EXXILON, WHICH WAS VERY SHOCKING. DID YOU HAVE ANY VIEWS ON VIOLENCE IN THE SHOW ? IT BECAME CONTROVERSIAL LATER ON, BUT WAS IT AN ISSUE THEN ?
I think violence is a very real problem. I think, when DOCTOR WHO first started, my memory of it was that there was some violence but the Doctor himself never got involved in violence at all. I seem to think that his companions sometimes saw violence as the way to solve the problem, but the Doctor was rather firm on this and instead used wit and so on. I was saddened the first time I saw the Doctor using a gun—I thought that was a very bad step.

I actually thought the sonic-screwdriver was a bad step too, although I was partly instrumental in suggesting that was the way to undo bolts. The first time the sonic-screwdriver was used (in FURY FROM THE DEEP) was to undo bolts in a door. We were chatting about how the Doctor was going to escape this time and we were facing the problem that he got a screwdriver out and undid the lock on the door, and then you suddenly realised that in fact screws are put in from the back in locks on doors. You very rarely noticed it but it's to stop people taking nuts out. So I think I said (snaps fingers), "I know what he does ! He uses a sonic-screwdriver !". And that really just vibrates at the right interval, the screws turned around, and it was a good visual effect—very easy to make. And we used that as a way to enable the Doctor to escape, and I think that that was probably the biggest disservice I ever did to DOCTOR WHO because of what it started off. I remember being stuck and having the blasted sonic-screwdriver blowing up landmines and things in THE SEA DEVILS. The Doctor had never done that before and I was wrong.

I think it's a good thing they later destroyed it. I don't think the Doctor should ever use a gun, I don't think he should ever really use a weapon at all. I think it's probably acceptable that if he's attacked physically he defends himself. I think that's perfectly reasonable. But I don't think he should ever use violence to solve problems. His assistants ? I think it is acceptable that if they want to use violence to solve problems—and then the Doctor shows them that it is not the right way. I'm not a pacifist, except that I do think killing people is wrong. I do think there is a place for violence. I think that sometimes you have to defend yourself and I do not have time for people who would not. I wouldn't let people walk all over me, but I would do it defensively and I hope I would never do it to attack. I think it's a shame the Doctor has been allowed to attack and fight his enemy because he never used to.

ONE OF THE BEST SEQUENCES IN 'DEATH TO THE DALEKS' WAS THE ELECTRONIC ROOT COMING OUT OF THE WATER AND THE SETTING FIRE TO AN EXXILON. DID THAT TAKE A LOT OF WORK ?
Yes, that was good. I was really pushing them over that and I was very pleased with it. The root sequence was basically a very easy shot. I sometimes got worried about all our electronic effects because I didn't feel they always looked real. I think in a way if you want those effects you might as well switch on Scooby Doo. And that root monster seemed to me an oppurtunity to do an effect where I could get the guys working at it and it would only take five minutes to shoot. It's probably obvious how it was done, and it wasn't totally successful, but I think it was good enough. The instructions were to sling a cable across the gap between a cliff on one side and a sort of cave on the other and to sling some piano wire on a block and to simply bring the thing up on the piano wire. It really works just like that. There was a problem with the piano wires in that the sun was glinting on them because, as they came up out of the water, they retained a certain amount of moisture. But I don't think anyone had done that effect in that way before.

YOU WERE ALSO WORKING WITH THE DALEKS AGAIN. HOW DID THIS COMPARE TO WORKING WITH THEM BACK IN THE SIXTIES ? THEY SEEMED SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT AND THEY HAD A STUNNING NEW PAINT SCHEME AND YOU ALSO HAD THEM RUNNING AROUND ON SAND WITH RAILS UNDERNEATH ?
The paint-scheme was only because the Daleks used to live at Pinewood and BBC Enterprises used to use the Daleks for the exhibitions and they didn't ever get refurbished. So when I inherited them they were in a pretty sad and sorry state and badly needed a new paint job. My memory of it was that I went back to the Daleks as I knew them in the William Hartnell days and I think I had them repainted in that scheme because that was my memory of them. I'd sort of missed a generation of Daleks so I just did them like that.

As for running on sand, I'd never had Daleks on location and I suddenly realised that in this goddamned sandpit there was just no way you could have Daleks on silent runners running around. So I thought about the problem, and going back to what I said earlier, there are lots of solutions, and one of the solutions was

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to put down a piece of hardboard, paint it sand-coloured, and let them run around on that. But that's very limited. When they had to be travelling long distances or walking along with the Doctor and his friends, it occurred to me that you needed a different way around that problem. LE-Mat dolleys are what you track film cameras around on, and with a sheet of LE-Mat you have a railway line. So we hired all the railway line that LE-Mat DOlleys had in the country, and painted them yellow to match the sand...which didn't please the company when they were returned !

I had LE-Mat Dolley wheels, LE-Mat bases put underneath the 3 Daleks so that either you could tow them along on a piano wire out of shot or you could put your hand around it and walk it.

For the major scene—which was Jon Pertwee, John Abineri and someone else who I forget—you had five or six people walking down this path with the Daleks all chatting. This was the longest track I think I've ever seen and I had it on a bit of a slope. Jon was in the lead and it was his job to set off the first Dalek, then set off the second Dalek and John Abineri was to push the third Dalek, and they would all walk along together and have this long conversation. I was up on the top of this sand-dune with the camera and shouted "Action!" and dear old Jon gave the first Dalek a hell of a push and got it running down the track (up to now he'd been on the flat and had never done it on a slope before). And then he got the second one going and then started walking. And from up there looking down all I could see were these Daleks vanishing at a hundred miles an hour down the tracks, and these figures following slowly behind. Then the front Dalek, which must have been doing thirty miles an hour and had a bit of a wheel wobble on it, started shaking from side to side ! And there was this little voice from inside shouting "Help! Help!" And of course they couldn't get their feet down because of this LE-Mat track so it was shaking. I fell down and started laughing and John Scott Martin (I think it was) careered off the end of the track at about thirty miles an hour and crashed ! I shouted, "Are you okay?" and before he could say anything the next two Daleks came catapulting into him !

WAS HE ALRIGHT ?

In the end, yes. He was fine, but we soon decided that Daleks on LE-Mat track going down-hill aren't terribly safe !

REVENGE OF THE CYBERMEN—IT WAS ORIGINALLY A JON PERTWEE SCRIPT

'REVENGE OF THE CYBERMEN' WAS YOUR NEXT STORY AND AGAIN YOU WERE DEALING WITH AN OLD FOE. THE CYBERMEN HAD NOT APPEARED FOR SEVEN YEARS AND THERE WAS A SLIGHT REDESIGN, ESPECIALLY THE GUNS IN THE HELMETS WHICH WERE VERY EFFECTIVE. WAS THAT YOUR INFLUENCE ?

It was like with the Daleks. We got the remaining couple of Cybermen out of store and they were absolutely knackered and they looked desperately old-fashioned. When you looked at them, you could see they were old bits of plastic tubing and everything else, and what was okay seven years ago really wouldn't do now. So one was into a remake of the Cybermen.

I also couldn't understand the logic of Cybermen having guns in their hands, because a Cyberman is only a robot. It's not a human being—it's just a robot, a machine. So if a Cyberman is just a machine, and it's meant to be a fighting machine, why attach a gun to its hand ? Why not have a gun element built into the machine ? So it just seemed logical to do that. And then where do you put the gun ? We thought about the chest, and so on, but there's not much sense in putting it there so the helmet seemed the logical place to put the gun. The Sea Devils' gun had worked well so I thought we could use exactly the same technology for the Cybermen. What had been wrong with the Sea Devils was that their guns could only fire one shot and then you'd have to change the gun, and it took about ten minutes to reload. That was something we only discovered when we came to do it. So having been through with that technology, we decided to make the guns four-shooters.

PEOPLE GENERALLY THINK THAT THE TARDIS TEAM OF THAT TIME—BAKER, LADEN AND MARTER—WAS THE BEST EVER. DO YOU AGREE ?

Yes, they were marvellous together. It was difficult for Tom as it was one of his first stories and he was doing what was originally a Jon Pertwee script with a director who had not done a lot of shows with Jon Pertwee. There was no particular policy (there ever has been with a new Doctor as to how he should play it) but as the director it was quite worrying because Tom really didn't know what he wanted to do with the part. I'd got a script which called for an 'action-packed' Doctor. I think for both of us it was a real problem because I wasn't sure what he wanted to do, but the fact that he, Ian and Lis got on so well was wonderful, and it did ease the problem.

I GATHER YOU HAD PROBLEMS FILMING IN THE CAVES ?

Well, you've heard all the stories about the ghost, and of Lis almost drowning, but I actually think, in retrospect, that we were suffering from a form of oxygen starvation. A film crew is about 60 to 70 people strong, and to fit that many people into a cave that has no natural air supply is asking for trouble and you will start having accidents and making mistakes because you are suffering from a lack of air. I think that may be why there were problems.

'REVENGE OF THE CYBERMEN' HAS NOW BEEN RELEASED ON VIDEO BY THE BBC. DID YOU RECEIVE A NOMINAL FEE FOR THIS ?

I think I've got a fiver for it somewhere !

ROBOTS OF DEATH—"OH, NO ! NOT ANOTHER SET OF ROBOTS !"

YOUR FINAL STORY TO DATE WAS 'THE ROBOTS OF DEATH'. IT'S BEEN SAID YOU WERE NONE TOO HAPPY WHEN YOU SAW THE ORIGINAL SCRIPT ?

I think the script ended up working very well indeed. I was suffering possibly from having done too many DOCTOR WHOs, and I think the designer (Ken Sharp) was in a similar situation. I had done 30 or 40 episodes by this time, and you actually started to say, "Oh, no ! Not another set of robots !" Because all the Robots of Death were originally were just robots. They could've been like the I.M.C. robot, or the Daleks or the Cybermen. They were just robots !

This crewed spaceship that all the plot took place on had no details. We had a couple of days of model-shooting of this mining spaceship but no-one had thought about it in detail. The whole story was really just an Agatha Christie whodunnit. That's really what it was, set in a big silver-lined space-station, and REVENGE OF THE CYBERMEN had also been very, very similar. I really just got exhausted with it and didn't know what to do. And the designer, who had done Troughton episodes and so on, had been through a similar sort of thing.

The two of us met up briefly and I said, "What do you know of open-cast mining ?" He said, "Nothing", so I said, "Well, we'd better go and look at an open-cast mine !" So we found out that open-cast mining was being done down in Cornwall and the first thing we saw when we got there was this great big scoop. Well, the way that you could move vast quantities of material would be with a kind of pincer, and all these drones would be overseeing it. And so you had to think of a way that you could move vast quantities of sand and I thought of big, very high-powered water jets. In comes all the rock, the ore, the sand and everything. Water then carries it along to a central point where great metal scoops sort it all out. That's how it works today in a very primitive way. In a more advanced time with it all concentrated on one ship you'd use water cannon, and you could use Archimedes Screw principle to bring it all inside where it would all be sorted out and so you'd end up with pure ore. So we got that part sorted out.

As for the inside of the ship, the designer just felt he could not face any more silver walls or Cybermen again. He'd done it all before and he asked, "Is there NOTHING you can do that's new ?" Then I said, "Well, I suppose it doesn't have to be silver walls, does it ? It doesn't have to be white costumes and space-suits and all that. We could possibly have any decor we liked". Because if people were going to be sent off to a foreign place to live, and in an enormous ship (like in the Queen Elizabeth or the Queen Mary), you could have the living-quarters decorated in any style you liked.

Ken agreed and then we decided that of course you wouldn't have to wear space-suits because equally if you've got labourers to do all the work for you—which are the robots—then you could dress yourself in any costume you liked. You didn't have to wear working outfits or protective gear. Then we came to the robots, and Ken said that if you thought about it they could be any form you liked, and suggested Elizathean, Greek or Roman. I said I quite fancied the idea of Greek robots ! Then Ken snapped his fingers and shouted, "Art deco ! It's got to be art deco !" He then proceeded to study art deco books and went on board the Queen Mary, which was made in art deco style. We decided that the entire ship would be in art deco, all the costumes were to be art deco, and we even decided to have art deco robots as well ! Because why not ? Why always have robots looking like the Tin Man ? Why not have them so that they fit in with the surroundings and are attractive and good looking ? So, we wanted the most beautiful robot, very elegant, very good looking, in a nice costume and looking as if it fitted in with the surroundings. And it would be charming and pleasant with whom to play chess, or to have a cup of tea with, or to discuss things with or to make your bed for you. It would be absolutely terrific . . .

So that's why ROBOTS OF DEATH ended up looking like it did.

THIS STORY FEATURED LOUISE JAMESON AS THE ALIEN SAVAGE LEELA. WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THIS RADICAL BREAK WITH TRADITIONAL COMPANIONS ?

Oh, I thought that was awfully good. I thought it worked particularly well in those surroundings. You had all this sophistication, all this elegance, and then you had this female savage in leather skins. Very ordinary but a very beautiful lady with very basic instincts.

HAD TOM BAKER SETTLED INTO HIS ROLE BY THIS TIME DID YOU FIND ?

Oh, absolutely. Tom was THE Doctor by then and no question about it !

GRAHAM WILLIAMS—"COME AND DO ANOTHER DOCTOR WHO"

THAT WAS YOUR LAST 'WHO TO DATE. WAS THAT A DECISION YOU MADE TO MOVE ON OR DID THE OFFERS SIMPLY STOP COMING ?

You don't, in this business, "move on". All that happened was that after then I was working at Yorkshire Television, and then I think at London Weekend. When I was phoned up to do another DOCTOR WHO I was just always doing other things. I would just

dearly have loved to have come back and done another one. Graham Williams phoned once, and I'd already agreed to do Warship which I enjoyed doing tremendously. It just happened that whenever the phone calls came I was always doing another job, so it just did not work out.

I remember Graham Williams getting very cross with me, because he said, "You've got to come and do another DOCTOR WHO, I absolutely insist !", and I said, "Love to Graham", and he said, "Right". He got his diary out and said, "What about..?", and I said, "Look, Graham, I can't ! I'm working for Yorkshire Tele - vision for the whole year !" He said, "But you owe it to DOCTOR WHO ", but I'd already signed a contract and I would have been sued.

And gradually people stopped phoning me up and it's as simple as that. It really is as simple as that—they just stopped calling. Yes, I love DOCTOR WHO, I think it's great. If I'm free and I'm offered a DOCTOR WHO, of course I'd be thrilled to do it, especially after 8 years. But then, I'm a great believer that you can't organise your life. All you can do is roll with it.

THE CANCELLATION—DOCTOR WHO WAS NEVER GUARANTEED

IMMEDIATELY AFTER DOCTOR WHO YOU DIRECTED FOUR EPISODES OF THE FIRST SERIES OF 'BLAKES 7', INCLUDING THE FIRST EPISODE — 'THE WAY BACK'.

Yes, there were three directors in the beginning. Myself, Pennant Roberts and Vere Lorrimer. And the producer was David Maloney , who had directed a lot of DOCTOR WHO. It was very much a group effort but David as producer always had the final say in casting .

SO YOU WOULD STILL BE HAPPY TO RETURN TO DOCTOR WHO, ASSUMING THE SERIES CONTINUES ?

Yes, if I was free and they offered me, then of course. It's a great show and it has been part of my life for 15 years , and a very important part. Barry Letts giving me the oppurtunity to do COLONY IN SPACE was probably the biggest single factor in my career and for me—as a very young and inexperienced director who had just done the BBC training course—(I think I'd only done two episodes of The Newcomers or something), to be given a six part serial where you had total control of all the cast, all the costumes, all the set deign, all the effects and everything; to be given that was absolutely make or break. I used to drive home thinking, "If I just crash this car into that lamp-post I would not have to go on with the show, would I ? It was SO frightening and daunting.

Doing DOCTOR WHO is really the hardest job in the business . Technically, you have to know your stuff upside down , back to front. It is so difficult and I admire very much all the blokes who are doing it today because the knowledge of electronics has had to increase far more than when I was doing it. It's such a tough show to do that if you can actually walk in and do a six parter, then you're never really afraid of anything after that !

DOCTOR WHO taught me how to deal with effects and all the technical side. Then it taught me how to work with actors, and how to understand them. DOCTOR WHO taught me the art of the impossible, really.

And I also did scripts which I thought were good then and still have a message for today. There's not many other shows of that period which are still remembered so much today. So to have worked on one of the best shows in television, and one of the most complicated, leaves me obviously with a debt to it.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OPINIONS AS TO WHY THE SHOW WAS CANCELLED ?

I don't have any knowledge on that. I only heard what John Nathan Turner said up in Manchester, that the show had never been can - celled as such and that it would be back next year.

HAVE YOU ANY IDEAS AS TO WHY THE BBC HEADS SHOULD SUDDENLY TURN AGAINST THE SHOW ? PETER DAVISON, FOR EXAMPLE, STATED HE THOUGHT THEY HAD TO CUT IT TO SAVE X POUNDS, AND THE SHOW COST X POUNDS.

Yes, I think there may be something in that. DOCTOR WHO was never guaranteed. We always had late scripts because nobody could beforehand commission the writers until the hierarchy announced DOCTOR WHO would continue, and the hierarchy would never do that automatically. I don't usually subscribe to conspiracy theories. It may just have been that there was the need for a cut and DOCTOR WHO filled the gap.

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FORTHCOMING 'HIDEAWAY'..

It's rather different from DOCTOR WHO amd is about a very successful villain who decides to give up being a villain and discovers it's not that easy. I suppose really it's about leopards not being able to change their spots.

AND WHEN WILL WE SEE IT ?

The last that I'd heard was that it will be shown on BBC1 in the New Year, around February.

FINALLY, I'M SURE I SPEAK FOR ALL DOCTOR WHO FANS WHEN I SAY THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR THE SERIES, AND ALSO WHEN I SAY THAT I HOPE IT WILL NOT BE TOO LONG BEFORE YOU RETURN.

You're very kind.

MICHAEL BRIANT, THANKYOU

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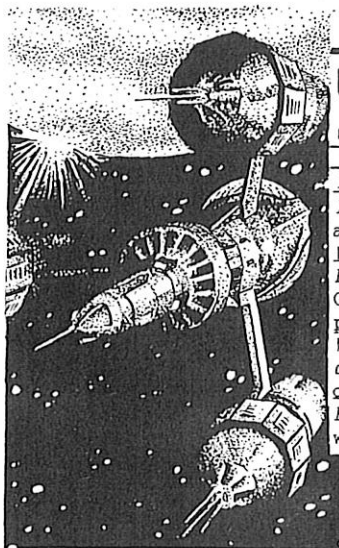

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THE MAGAZINE OF BRITISH TELEFANTASY

"Christine Donougher—the very name sends a shiver down the spine . . ."

Well, perhaps not quite. Nevertheless, to any would-be author anxiously trundling his harp to a party in the vain hope someone will ask him to play, broaching the high-vaulted doors of W.H.Allen is an experience akin to auditioning for New Faces with the knowledge that Bernard Manning is on the panel !

Of course, I'd known Christine Donougher—the then Target editor—from my days with DOCTOR WHO Monthly, but knowing that only served as a double-edged weapon. True it gave the advantage of asking for an interview on first name terms, but true also the pre-knowledge of a Sloane Square ranger-type capable of making, "Can you be here 3.30 p.m. Monday?" sound like, "Don't forget to wash first, will you ?"

Christine read the portfolio, umm-ed a bit, ah-ed a bit, looked at the photos and said, "How nice" in that manner teachers reserve for the efforts of backward schoolchildren, and then finally suffixed the whole interview with a, "You realise I can't give you a decision now, but I will put this to our planning committee in a fortnight's time". End of discussion—do close the door on your way out...

EVENTUALLY CAME THE PHONECALL

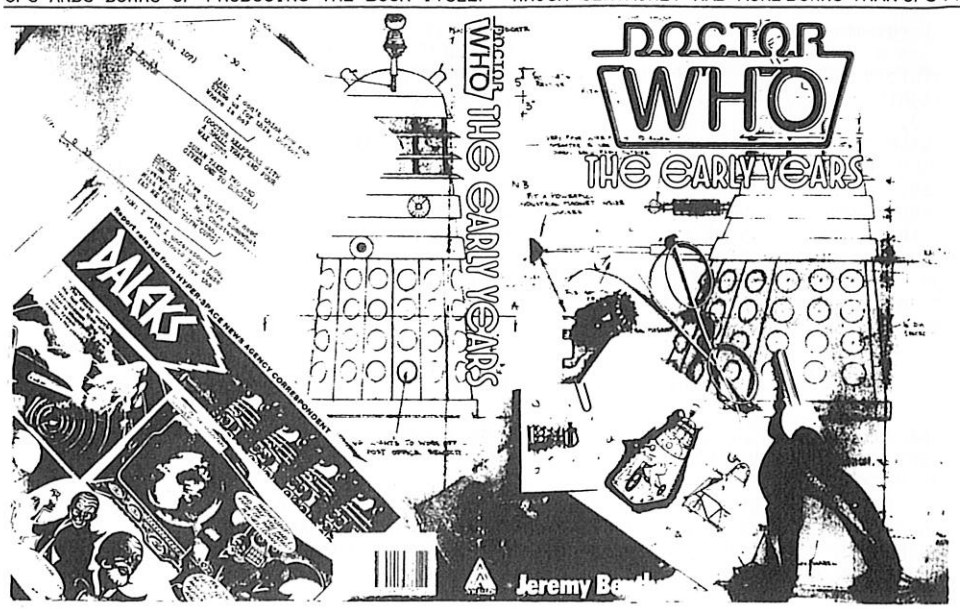
The date was Monday January 30th 1984. The bus journey from Hendon to the West End had taken 45 minutes, and the interview just under a third of that time. Had Frederick Forsyth's dispossession of W.H.Allen begun in such underwhelming circumstances, I wondered as I trod a freezing path back to a freezing bus stop to wait a freezing 20 minutes for a bus laughingly promised at 9 minute intervals. To be quite frank, by the time the 113 unexpectedly turfed its passengers off at Swiss Cottage for a further 15 minutes freezing sojourn, I was all ready to expect the return of the portfolio by the end of the week with two rejection slips inside—one to save me the bother of travelling into London the next time I had a bright idea !

It didn't happen. Mind you, neither did anything else for nearly three weeks. Then eventually came THE phonecall. Displaying an incredible insight into my emotional make-up, Christine Donougher told me I'd be delighted to learn W.H.Allen were very interested in the book. Would I now like to get on with it while they drew up the contract and started negotiations with BBC Publications ? I told her I was delighted (what acumen, eh ?), I would be delighted to get on with it, and I was even more delighted on hearing that BBC Publications were handling the book end of the DOCTOR WHO empire rather than the "Headless Chickens Department" which normally (mis)manages the BBC's licensed enterprises. That last comment even won a laugh from Christine—a first time for everything, ya chaps ?

"WHY DOCTOR WHO ?"

In the interim period, 'twixt freezing and jesting, a great many ideas had come and gone concerning content of The Early Years. There was no denying the backbone of the whole project was still to present the visual vista afforded by Raymond Cusick's self-made archive. But Cusick had only been around from about the mid-point of DOCTOR WHO's conception. What about all those inspirational and policy decisions that had brought the show into being in the first place ? What about the whole question of "Why DOCTOR WHO ?" In fact, the more one thought about it, the more it became painfully apparent how little was truly understood about the beginnings of a show which, curiously, both defied and manifested the concept of 'formula television'.

PART 2—LAST ISSUE, JEREMY BENTHAM EXPLAINED THE VARIOUS EVENTS WHICH LED TO THE INITIAL IDEA OF 'DOCTOR WHO—THE EARLY YEARS'—FROM A ROUTINE INTERVIEW WITH RAYMOND CUSICK IN NINETEEN SEVENTY-SEVEN FOR THE DWAS MAGAZINE 'TARDIS', TO THE N.F.T. FILM FESTIVAL IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-THREE. JEREMY CONCLUDES HIS SPECIAL PREVIEW BY CONCENTRATING ON THE UPS ANDS DOWNS OF PRODUCING THE BOOK ITSELF—WHICH CERTAINLY HAD MORE DOWNS THAN UPS...



Could the book be enlarged ? That was the question which plagued insomniac nights throughout February and March 1984. If so, reason concluded, it would only be possible provided those present at DOCTOR WHO's very beginnings could be tracked down and persuaded to tell their stories. And that, in turn, meant relying on everything from the apocryphally-prone Fandom Grapevine to the memory vagaries of people unconnected with DOCTOR WHO for the last 20 years.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT SYDNEY NEWMAN LOOKS LIKE ?

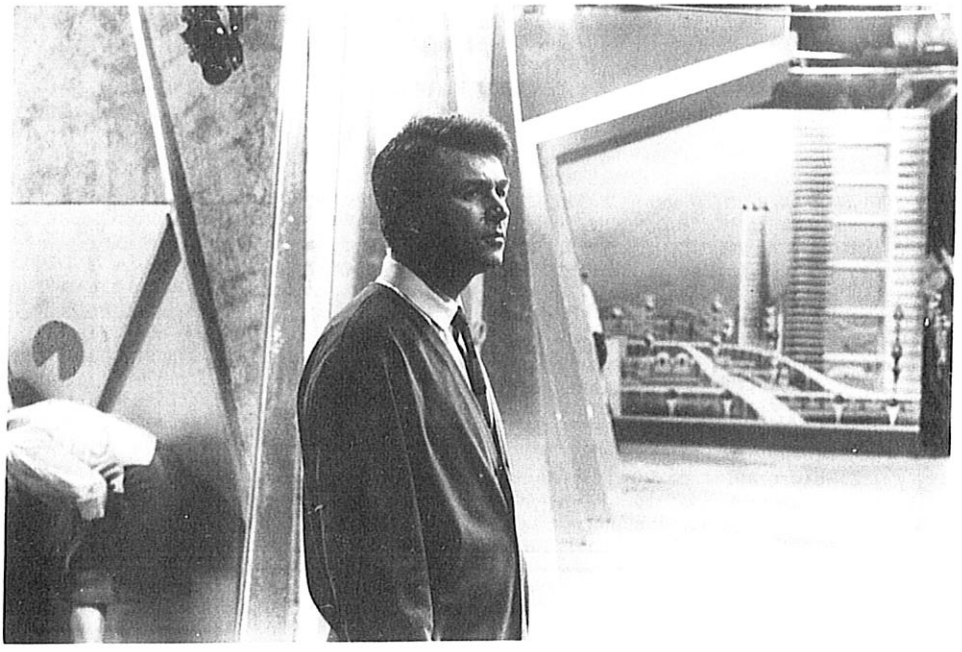
The very beginning meant finding Sydney Newman and, to give credit where due, the Canadian D.W.I.N. group came up trumps here. Dean Shewring provided an address, a letter was drafted, and fingers were crossed for some form of reply worthy of inclusion within the book's tentatively expanded framework.

The eventual results changed the course of the book forever more. Some people, when replying to letters, write paragraphs of information—Sydney Newman writes whole chapters ! His nine page letter revealed more about DOCTOR WHO's roots, influences and structures than had been cumulatively harvested by fans throughout the last 8 years. It was stupendous stuff. But even more stupendous was the news that Newman himself was coming to England in a few weeks time and would be happy to spill even more beans—perhaps over a lunch...

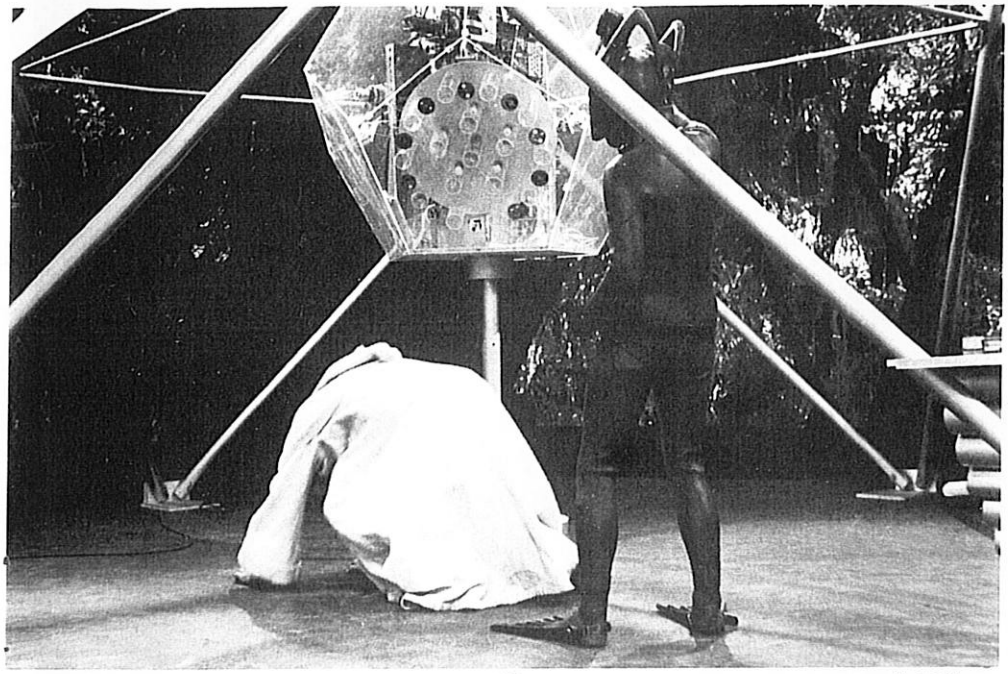
Picture the scene: 7 15 p.m., May 23rd 1984, outside London's Great Portland St. station. Two figures, fellow CMS writer Dave Auger and myself, are anxiously studying the late rush-hour faces hurrying to and fro amidst this metropolitan warren;

Jeremy—Dave, do you know what Sydney Newman looks like ?

Dave —No, but I do know everyone describes him as having a very feline face, like a cross between a cat and a



IAN CHESTERTON (WILLIAM RUSSELL) LOOKS OUT OVER THE DALEK CITY IN 'THE DALEKS', 1963/'64



ARBITAN, KEEPER OF THE CONSCIENCE, IS STRUCK DOWN BY A VOORD IN 'THE KEYS OF MARINUS', 1964

Chinese Mandarin.

Jeremy—Oh God...

Ten minutes later, having suffered visions of comic rejects from Tom & Jerry cartoons springing out of escalators, he arrived, very un-comic but, strangely, very feline looking! And after a very lengthy and involved evening's discussions, the course ahead for the book looked clear and trouble free indeed.

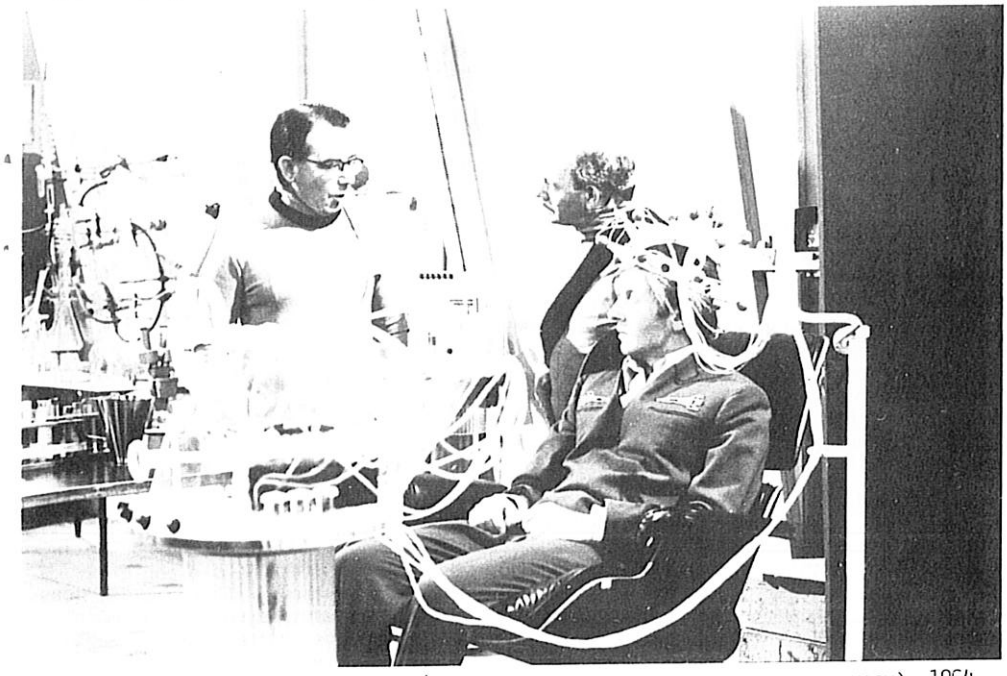
Yet, even as the good ship Early Years sailed on into the sunset, lurking beneath the waves was a threat armed with some very powerful torpedoes...

THANK YOU AND GOODNIGHT BBC ENTERPRISES

As has been well documented by DWB, two complaints, coincidentally by two former DOCTOR WHO actresses, resulted in Equity (the actors' union) re-examining their contracts with the BBC and discovering they owned rights on the issuing of any publicity photographs. Basically, unless ALL the artists in any BBC photo has given written consent, the intended publisher of those photos cannot use them.

The torpedo hit home early in the summer of '84 when Christine Donougher rang to say that unless I could guarantee letters of authorisation from all the artists in Ray Cusick's stills, she was afraid that W.H.Allen could not issue a contract for the book. I liked that bit; she was afraid. I was apoplectic—especially after an evening looking through all the photographs, trying to draw up a list of who were actors, who were technicians, how many were still alive, did that matter, etc., etc..

I rang Equity to explain my problem, but they proved as much use as a side of pork at a Jewish wedding, smugly re-iterating that as far as they were concerned the matter was closed for debate. I rang BBC Publicity. They suggested I contact BBC Enterprises. I rang BBC Enterprises and they said they'd be delighted to help! All I had to do was to send them copies of all the photographs intended for use in the book and they would, for a "standard charge", arrange all the necessary clearances. That sounded okay...until the nature of the "standard charge" was outlined. I said I wasn't sure if the figure quoted was the fee or the telephone number I should call in case of query—I was told it was the fee! Couple that with the cost of duplicating all the stills and you come up with a very novel concept indeed—spend more money writing a book than you'll ever get back having it published. This was art with a capital "F"... Thank you and goodnight, BBC Enterprises!



REHEARSALS FOR 'THE SENSORITES' (NOTE PETER GLAZE WITHOUT SENSORITE MASK), 1964

In desperation I called BBC Publications. They were more sympathetic (I wasn't the first caller they'd had on the subject), and suggested I should go direct to the BBC's Legal department who had, for some time, been hotly contesting this whole issue with Equity.

If anyone deserves credit for saving The Early Years it must be the BBC's legal wing who took up the case, hammered it out letter for letter with Equity, and eventually came back with the pronouncement that if the photos were the property of Raymond Cusick, and not the BBC, then the only letter of permission needed was from Ray himself. That phonecall, and the subsequent letter verifying that statement, took six months of work and effort to win, but it made the project viable again, just in time for Christmas. I seem to recall getting very drunk that night, eventually sinking into the arms of Morpheus mid-way through a chorus of The Beatles' Paperback Writer...

The next day, after two aspirins, I sent a copy of the hard won letter to W.H.Allen.

ROBINSON, THAT NAME RANG A BELL...

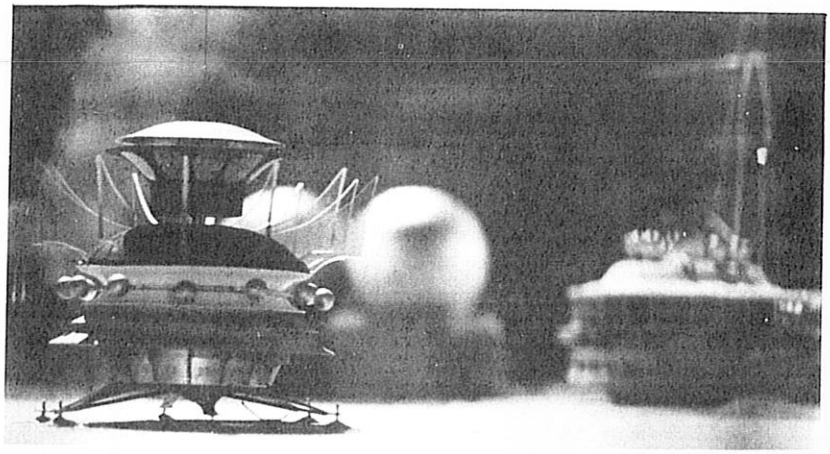
I didn't hear anything more until mid-February 1985, during which time I had tracked down and interviewed June Barry—the first wife of the late David Whitaker—and written up the whole chapter dealing with the script-writing aspects of the early serials. I was just about getting to the stage of thinking the whole thing was likely to end up as a gigantic Space and Time release unless someone did something soon, when all of a sudden someone did. And guess what, it began with a phonecall.

The voice on the other end announced himself as Nigel Robinson. Robinson, that name rang a bell... Surely not the fellow who used to ring up to ask the precise spelling of THE PIRATE PLANET's Captain's spacecraft and suchlike for his Quiz Books? Yup, the very same. Doubtless in penance for inflicting such torturous questions on his Christmas readers, Nigel had accepted the post as Editor in charge of the Target DOCTOR WHO series, and as an even greater act of masochism, was wanting to see The Early Years in production as soon as possible.

A LONE SALT CELLAR

It was March 5th 1985—another wintry day of brass monkeys in search of soldering irons—when Moses finally stepped off a 113 to receive manna from heaven in the form of his long-promised contract.

The document was signed virtually with an air of disbelief. Now all that remained was the simple task of putting together 50,000 words of lucid text, backed up with associated photographs, blueprints, floor-plans, cpnstructed drawings and paintings, within five months. After all the trials and tribulations of the last year and a



LEFT: MAVIC CHEN'S SPACESHIP, THE SPAR, FROM 'THE DALEKS' MASTERPLAN', 1965. RIGHT: CAROLE ANNE FORD INTERVIEWED AT HOME FOR THE BOOK.

DOCTOR WHO-THE EARLY YEARS IS PUBLISHED BY W.H.ALLEN ON 15 MAY 1986. (£13.50, 232 PAGES, COLOUR ILLUSTRATED, 286 x 209MM, ISBN 0 491 03612 4).

half, it almost seemed like the easy bit.

Almost...

It's a lonely and intense occupation writing a book, especially one that has to make sense as a whole when only parts of the sum are drafted. Along the way there were some disappointments, such as learning of the death of Heather Hartnell just weeks before a planned interview was scheduled to take place, or the heart-sinking agony of seeing five hours work vanish from a computer-screen thanks to a power cut.

But there were also some lighter moments, like the day commissioned photographer Phil Bevan discovered Carole Ann Ford's very large dog didn't trust him any more than any other self-respecting woman ought: "It's funny, she doesn't normally behave like this", puzzled Susan Foreman's alter-ego, and a frenzy of barks and growls greeted Phil's every attempt to move from his chair to take further photographs.

Casual observers over the high walls of the Civil Service's Fire Research complex one Sunday afternoon might have been puzzled by the sight of two full-size Daleks being trundled around the furnaces and testing chambers of this normally secure establishment. It was bid by Bevan and myself to take contemporary shots of Cusick and his creations against a high tech background, under the omni-present threat of discovery by some over-time working 'Jobsworth' keen to point out, "You can't do that 'ere mate".

And, most hilarious of all, was the day a celebrated North London restaurant was descended on with lights, cameras and tripods —the only subject, to the management's amazement, being a lone salt cellar which just happened to be the very make Cusick had used as inspiration for his most lauded creation.

A FREEZING AFTERNOON...

The author's main work on the book finished with the delivery of the manuscript on — you've got it — a freezing afternoon in early August (well, it was a rotten summer, wasn't it ?). Even that wasn't easy.. If you've ever contemplated negotiating your way on and off a rush hour bus, weighed down with a barrage of 3' x 3' blueprints, a bag full of photographs, a document case and two very large, card-mounted paintings, my advise to you is don't, unless you're terminally fond of aimless discussions and aching limbs. It only encourages everyone from old ladies to Bostick sniffers to stop you and say, quite pointlessly, "Isn't that a Dalek ?", when it's perfectly apparent to all but the blind that that is exactly what it is—so why say it ?!?

Whether or not the finished book will be worth the £13 50 cover price is not up to me to say. I do, however, reserve quite a lot to say to those confidently asking after a second volume by Christmas 1986. The problem is, none of it is printable !

(...Continued from page 2)

tradiction in two consecutive stories: In VENGEANCE ON VAROS, Sil had said, "The engines of every known solar-system cry out for (Zeiton 7) to drive their space / time craft", yet in the following story not only are the Time Lords concerned about one experiment, but we are told that successful time travel can only be achieved once the equipment has been primed by the presence of a gland unique to Time Lords !

The worst result of Saward's instructions to writers to limit plot was part two of TIMELASH where it became increasingly obvious that there wasn't enough story left to fill the 45 minutes. The scene in the cheap-looking Timelash interior was far too long, the Tardis scene which killed all the previously built up tension caused by the approaching Bandrillian missile would have been obvious padding even if the sudden increase in the length of Colin Baker's hair hadn't given the game away, but most criminal of all was to allow the return of the Borad after he had been so ingeniously disposed of, with the ludicrous explanation that the earlier one had been a clone ! The otherwise excellent scene—where we hear off camera "I am the Borad", followed by a close-up of his face as he repeats the line—would have made such a superb cliffhanger that surely any script editor would have asked the writer to re-structure the story so that it formed the end of episode one ? This would have made the scene where the Borad's beam is reflected back at him, via the crystal from the Timelash, much more satisfying.

If evidence were ever required concerning Saward's attitude to the new format, one need only look at his own REVELATION OF THE DALEKS in which the Doctor and Peri don't arrive at Tranquil Repose until the first episode is drawing to a close. This would have been bad enough in a four-parter of the conventional format—but halfway through a 90-minute story is far too late to introduce the main characters to the action.

In view of the way Colin Baker plays the Doctor, this, in retrospect, is probably no bad thing, at least in the case of an excellent story like REVELATION OF THE DALEKS. When, in THE TWIN DILEMMA, the sixth Doctor made scathing comments concerning his previous incarnation and proceeded to behave in a menacing manner, the future looked bright. But since that rare magic moment where he attacked Peri, the current Doctor's characterisation has plummeted to such an extent that ironically there is far less drama attached to Baker's interpretation than there was to Davison's portrayal. This is due to the smug, self-satisfied, couldn't-care-less-about-danger attitude which overrides all other characteristics and leads to a two-dimensional portrayal which excludes viewer involvement. If one can't take the central character seriously then the whole credibility of the series suffers. In fact, in nearly every scene in which the sixth Doctor appears, I find myself smiling—which is a reaction I had hoped to leave behind with the 17th Season. One is further hindered from taking the Doctor seriously by his ridiculous costume. There's a lot of truth in the old adage: The clothes maketh the man !

On the subject of clothing, revealing clothing is not going to distract one's attention for long from what has become one of the most dramatically tedious companions ever —Peri. This is not the fault of Nicola Bryant who proved in THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI that, given a good script and good directing, she can act tremendously well. Give Lis Sladen any script and she'll turn the most mundane scene into compelling viewing, but an actress with Nicola Bryant's inexperience cannot be expected to just get on with it as seemed the case in Season 22. The writers may not have had much to go on but it is the script editor's job to compensate for any deficiencies in this area.

Michael Grade is correct. The show does need "a lot of work" to be done on it, the most important task being a refurbished production team complete with new ideas. Only then can it return "better than ever". As a programme, DOCTOR WHO has a potential which is limited only by imagination, and at its best is an enthralling blend of drama and creative ideas kept eternally fresh by its flexible format but with an illustrious past to reflect and build on. That's what I told Michael Grade; let's hope he agrees. (Following the curtailing of Season 23, it would seem the closing comment in my earlier article is even more pertinent now).

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS ARTICLE ARE THOSE OF TIM WESTMACOTT AND THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY CORRESPOND WITH THE EDITOR'S OWN OPINIONS.

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